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Memorial to Capt. S.A. Ashe

Heriot Clarkson

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MEMORIAL

TO

CAPT. SAMUEL A'COURT ASHE

In Capitol Square, Raleigh, N. C.

Written by HERIOT CLARKSON

April 1, 1941

SAMUEL ACOURT ASHE
1840 - 1938
PATRIOT-SOLDIER-HISTORIAN-EDITOR-CHRISTIAN
CAPTAIN AND ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL OF PENDER'S STAFF C.S.A.
HEROIC DEFENDER OF FORT WAGNER
AND TWICE CITED FOR CONSPICUOUS SERVICE IN THE BATTLE OF CEDAR RUN
AND SECOND MANASSAS.
BRIGADIER GENERAL AND VICE COMMANDER OF THE UNITED CONFEDERATE VETERANS
THE LAST SURVIVING COMMISSIONED OFFICER OF THE CONFEDERATE NAVY & ARMY.
ETERNALLY YOUTH, ALWAYS THE FRIEND AND INSPIRER OF YOUTH.
FEW MEN HAVE LIVED SO MANY YEARS, HONORED AND LOVED THROUGH THEM ALL
A LIFE WHICH HAS ENRICHED THE SOUTH AND THE NATION
A LOVER OF PEACE BUT VALIANT FOR THE TRUTH.

Tablet on Front of Monument

THIS MONUMENT PLACED
WITH THE AFFECTION AND ESTEEM OF MANY
FRIENDS THROUGHOUT NORTH CAROLINA
AND THE NATION, WAS UNVEILED SEPT. 13, 1940,
THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF
CAPT. ASHE'S BIRTH.
THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE ASHE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
BY THEIR LOYAL WORK AND INFLUENCE HAVE HELPED TO MAKE
POSSIBLE THIS MEMORIAL.
HON. GEORGE GORDON BATTLE, CHAIRMAN
MRS. MARY WINDER OSBORNE, SECRETARY AND TREASURER
HON. JOSEPHUS DANIELS
HON. WALTER MURPHY
HON. HERIOT CLARKSON
MRS. LEWIS E. FISHER
HON. ERNEST M. GREEN
HON. WM. GRAHAM JARVIS
HON. THOMAS DIXON

Tablet on Rear of Monument

ON the beautiful and balmy day of September 13, 1940, there assembled in the capitol square, at Raleigh, N. C., a large gathering of high officials in the State government and a crowd of all sorts and conditions of men and women, to witness the ceremonies of the unveiling of the monument of Capt. Samuel A. Ashe.

In the Capitol Square are only a few monuments to good men who have gone before: George Washington, Zeb. B. Vance, Charles B. Aycock, Charles D. McIver, Ensign Worth Bagley and Private Wyatt. This great honor was a worthy tribute to a noble scion of a knightly race, to one springing from a long line of honored ancestors who helped make this great Commonwealth. A few I mention: John Baptista Ashe, colonial statesman; John Baptista Ashe, II, colonial governor-elect; John Ashe, Revolutionary general; Samuel Ashe, judge and colonial governor; William Sheppard Ashe, judge; Thos. S. Ashe, Congressman and Confederate colonel; a brother, Thos. A. Ashe, was a member of the Supreme Court of North Carolina. The present generation has eminent and patriotic members. He came down not from the pee wee but eagles.

Perhaps no man has ever lived who was so worthy a member of the Society of the Cincinnati of North Carolina. "A tower that stood four square to all the winds that blew." We are richer for his life. It is a commendable fact that members of the Society of the Cincinnati took part in the erection of this monument.

Captain Ashe was born Sept. 13, 1840, and died Aug. 31, 1938, in his 98th year. The monument was unveiled on the 100th birthday of Captain Ashe. He was a gallant Confederate officer. He was an editor, historian and statesman. The eight volumes of Ashe's Biographical History of North Carolina, written by him and others, and his two volumes of the History of North Carolina have perpetuated the glorious history of North Carolina, and the lives and deeds of her distinguished sons and daughters.

Dr. T. B. Kinsbury said: "I am about to write a character sketch of a North Carolinian who has never occupied high office, who, by reason of original endowment, actual accomplishments and thorough usefulness, has performed real service for the Democratic Party and the welfare of North Carolina in a time of political stress and peril that equals fully the services rendered by any contemporary official, alone *excepting that puissant man of the people, Zebulon Baird Vance*. I refer to Samuel A. Ashe, a citizen of commanding individuality, and one of the ablest and best equipped editors of the South in the last thirty years. He may not be so well known as such, but that will not affect the truth of the statement nor in any

Capt. Samuel A'Court Ashe

way diminish his unmistakable merits. He is a North Carolinian of the purest type and deserves most richly to hold a front place among the genuine men of mark in our time and in our State. While Captain Ashe's chiefest reputation and most meritorious service are based on his editorial life, extending through many years, he has been a really powerful factor in political management even when not identified with a newspaper. He has long been a most useful, influential and judicious contributor to the press when not actually engaged in professional work as an editor."

The proposed Memorial foreword was as follows:

The Committee

The Hon. Geo. Gordon Battle,
Chairman, New York City
Mrs. Mary Winder Osborne,
Secretary-Treasurer, Box 180, Richmond, Va.
Mrs. John H. Anderson,
Daughter of Capt. Henry London, C. S. A.
Mrs. William J. Andrews
Mrs. T. Murray Allen
Mrs. Ashby L. Baker,
Daughter of Maj. R. S. Tucker, C. S. A.
Mrs. S. Westray Battle
Gen. Albert L. Cox,
Son of Gen. W. R. Cox, C. S. A.
Hon. Burton Craige
Justice Heriot Clarkson, N. C. Supreme Court,
Son of Major Wm. Clarkson, C. S. A.
Mrs. Charles A. Cannon, Author
Mrs. Heriot Clarkson,
Daughter of Col. E. A. Osborne, C. S. A.
The Hon Josephus Daniels,
U. S. Ambassador to Mexico
Hon. Thomas Dixon, Author
Hon. J. C. B. Ehringhaus
Mrs. L. E. Fisher, Pres. N. C. Div. of U. D. C.
Dr. Frank P. Graham,
President, University of North Carolina
Mr. Ernest M. Green,
Vice-President, N. C. Order of Cincinnati
Dr. Archibald Henderson,
University of North Carolina
Dr. Julian S. Miller, Editor, *Charlotte Observer*
Mrs. Wm. B. Little
Mr. Louis T. Moore,
Manager, Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
Mrs. Louis A. Mahler
Dr. Clarence Poe, Author-Publisher
Mr. Charles Root
Mrs. R. B. Raney,
Daughter of Capt. C. B. Denson, C. S. A.

DR. CHARLES LEE SMITH, Author-Publisher
MRS. LAWRENCE SPRUNT
MRS. ALFRED WILLIAMS,
Daughter of Gen. Bryan Grimes, C. S. A.
MRS. JULIAN S. WHITE,
Daughter of Col. Wm. L. de Rosset, C. S. A.
MR. J. FRANK WILKES, Son of Commander John Wilkes, Confederate Navy Yard, Charlotte.
MRS. PETER ARRINGTON
HON. WALTER MURPHY

THE ASHE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

has been organized for the purpose of placing an appropriate marker as a permanent memorial to the late Captain Samuel A'Court Ashe, C. S. A., and as a worthy expression of the love and esteem in which this patriot, soldier, scholar, historian and Christian citizen was held by a host of friends in his State, his South and his Nation.

THE MEMORIAL WILL BE PLACED IN RALEIGH

and will consist of a handsome bronze tablet, bearing a portrait of Captain Ashe, in bas-relief, heavily carved, resting upon a massive monument of North Carolina granite, and with the permission of the North Carolina General Assembly, placed on the Capitol grounds. As Captain Ashe was the last surviving commissioned officer of the Confederate States Army, a spot has been selected between the Confederate Monument and the Wyatt Monument to the first soldier of the Confederacy to die for the Lost Cause.

THE MONUMENT WILL BE PAID FOR BY PRIVATE SUBSCRIPTION

and will be of the best quality of material and workmanship, executed by the Gorham Company, of Rhode Island nationally known. Opportunity will be offered for both large and small gifts from the many who will wish to express their affection and admiration for Captain Ashe. Prompt response is urged that the order may be given for the work at an early date.

NOTE: Checks should be made payable to the Treasurer and will be deposited to the Ashe Memorial Fund, at First-Citizens Bank and Trust Co., Raleigh, N. C.

The legislative enactment authorizing this monument is as follows:

"EXTRA SESSION, 1938 CHAPTER 83.

H. B. 206

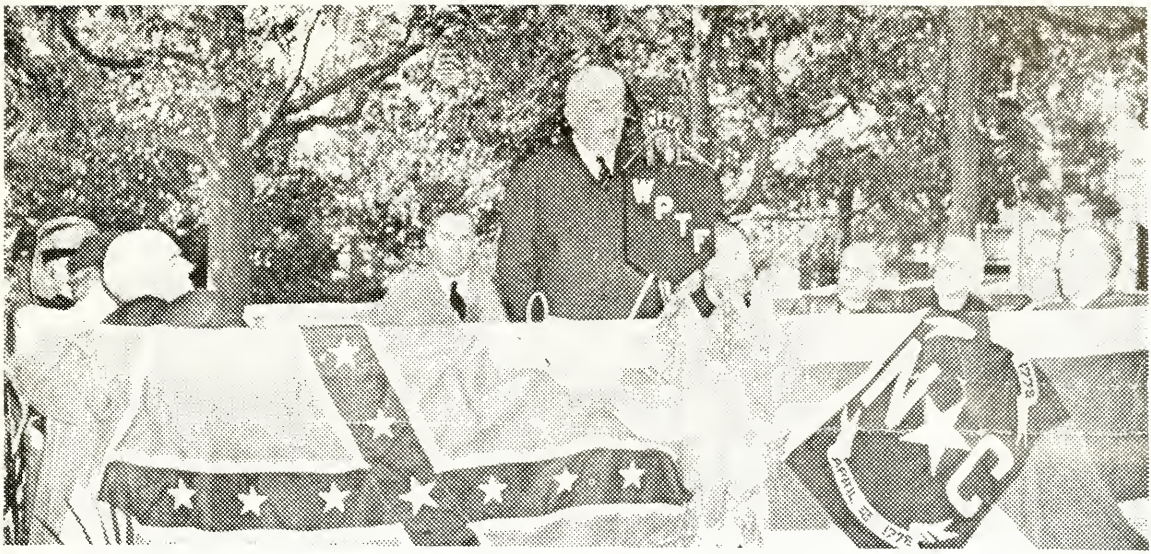
AN ACT TO ERECT A MEMORIAL TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE CAPTAIN SAMUEL A'COURT ASHE ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE STATE CAPITOL GROUNDS, RALEIGH, N. C.

WHEREAS, in the death of Captain Samuel A'Court Ashe, the State of North Carolina has sustained the loss of a son who in every sense was worthy of the proud position she has achieved among her sister states. A son as knightly, as without reproach and as beautiful as his great commander, the immortal Robert E. Lee. Personally commissioned an officer in the Confederate Army by President Davis, he served the lost cause with the valor and distinction of his race. A great man who did so much to immortalize and make beautiful the life and tradition of North Carolina, and with him died the last of the gallant cavaliers who officered the gray-clad hosts of the Confederacy, than whom no braver band ever stood arrayed in the ranks of war, and

WHEREAS, to preserve for posterity as an example of this worthy son of North Carolina, a committee of friends and admirers of Captain Samuel A'Court Ashe, soldier, historian, publicist and gentleman, present to the General Assembly of North Carolina their proposal to preserve his memory by a suitable memorial, and most respectfully request permission to place such memorial on the western side of the Capitol among the present memorials of the Confederacy, and to this end,

SECTION 1. That the following persons constitute the committee to carry out the purposes and intentions of this act: Honorable George Gordon Battle of New York, chairman; Honorable Josephus Daniels, Ambassador to Mexico; Dr. Frank Porter Graham, President of the University of North Carolina; Dr. Charles Lee Smith, historian; Honorable Heriot Clarkson, Justice of Supreme Court; Honorable Thomas Dixon, author; Honorable Archibald Henderson, mathematician, historian and biographer; Dr. Julian S. Little; Honorable J. C. B. Ehringhaus; Honorable Burton Craige; General Albert L. Cox; Mr. Ernest M. Green; Dr. Clarence Poe; Mr. E. A. Oldham; Mr. J. Frank Wilkes; Mr. Charles Root; Honorable Ed Chambers Smith; Mr. Louis T. Moore; Mr. Frank P. Haywood; Mistress Lawrence Sprunt; Mistress S. Westray Battle; Mistress L. E. Fisher; Mistress Charles A. Cannon; Mistress Ashby L. Baker; Mistress William J. Andrews; Mistress Alfred Williams; Mistress John H. Anderson; Mistress R. B. Raney; Mistress Heriot Clarkson; Mistress Julian S. White; Mistress William B. Little; Mistress T. Murray Allen; Mistress Louis A. Mahler; be, and the same are hereby appointed as a committee for the purpose of raising the necessary funds to erect a suitable, proper and decent memorial to Captain Samuel A'Court Ashe on the grounds of the State Capitol, western side, in the City of Raleigh, North Carolina.

SEC. 2. That the cost of this memorial shall be without appropriation or expense to the State of North Carolina, it being the desire of the above named committee to perpetuate the memory of North Carolina's valiant and beloved son, by voluntary and spontaneous contributions for the purpose of handing down to posterity the name of a man which ennobles the history, the tradition and the glory of the Old North State and this committee above mentioned is hereby direct-



Hon. George Gordon Battle Delivering Address

ed and empowered to erect and place such proper memorial they may decide is fitting and proper upon the State Capitol grounds in the City of Raleigh with and by the consent of the Governor of North Carolina and the Council of State.

Sec. 3. That this act shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 6th day of March, 1939."

"H.B. 1061. Chapter 374.

AN ACT TO CORRECT ERRORS IN HOUSE BILL NUMBER TWO HUNDRED AND SIX, KNOWN AS THE ASHE MEMORIAL BILL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That the name of Dr. Julian S. Little be stricken out and the name of Dr. Julian S. Miller be substituted therefor, and that the name of Mistress Mary Winder Osborne be added to the list of officials in said bill.

The cost of the monument, which has been paid, was:

The Gorham Co., Providence, R. I., sculptured cast bronze memorial tablet with bas-relief portrait of Samuel A'Court Ashe	$1,500.00
Express charges	24.90
Cast bronze tablet 30x20 "Ashe"	107.55
	$1,632.45
M. Arnaiz, Raleigh, N. C., stone work for memorial	885.00
	$2,517.45
Minor expenses about (itemized and paid for)	$ 500.00

The voluntary subscriptions to pay for this monument came from men and women in all walks of life . . . the rich and the poor, the great and the lowly.

The selection and price of the monument was carefully gone into by Hon. George Gordon Battle and a committee. The Gorham Company is one of the most reputable firms in the nation. They wrote me January 8, 1941, as to the cost as follows:

"This sculptured portrait model was made by Bernard Johnson, sculptor, who has created a number of portrait models cast by the Gorham foundries, and he has been eminently successful in this exacting type of work. Naturally, the cost of this sculptured detail enters greatly into the cost of the completed memorial which we have furnished for the Ashe memorial committee. We most assuredly feel that the charges made for the two tablets were as low as could possibly have been quoted consistent with the above mentioned highest quality of craftsmanship and material."

Having had experience in matters of this kind, being on the N. C. Historical Commission for long years, I think the charge most reasonable.

Hon. George Gordon Battle was selected to deliver the address at the unveiling. He, too, is a North Carolinian, like Captain Ashe, who came from a long line of distinguished forebears.

The dedication program was as follows:

DEDICATION OF ASHE MEMORIAL

SEPTEMBER 13, 1940

AT 3:00 P.M.—Capitol Square

(100TH BIRTHDAY OF CAPTAIN SAMUEL A. ASHE)

HERIOT CLARKSON, Senior Justice, Supreme Court of North Carolina, Presiding

120th Infantry Band of the National Guard

Invocation — DR. FORREST C. FEEZOR

Appreciation — MRS. MARY WINDER OSBORNE

Short Addresses

- HON. JOSEPHUS DANIELS, Telegram of regrets to read by HON. J. M. BROUGHTON
- DR. ARCHIBALD HENDERSON
- MRS. LEWIS E. FISHER, President, N. C. Division, U. D. C.
- HON. WALTER MURPHY
- MRS. CHAS. BOWLING of Richmond, Va., President Gen. of U. D. C.

Address — HON. GEORGE GORDON BATTLE, Chairman of Ashe Memorial Committee.

Presentation of Monument, HON. GRAHAM H. ANDREWS, Mayor of Raleigh

Acceptance — *His Excellency*, CLYDE R. HOEY

Unveiling — GEORGE F. BASON, Youngest Grandson of Captain Ashe

Wreath Will Be Placed at Base of Monument by MRS. HARRY MCGIRT, Second Vice-President of North Carolina Division of U. D. C.

Benediction — THE REV. ISAAC WAYNE HUGHES

Mr. Battle is a brilliant and successfuly attorney now practicing law in New York. Space will allow only short excerpts from his masterful address:

"We have met here today to honor this great son of North Carolina, who throughout his long life devoted his talents and his energies to the service of his mother State. We, the sons and daughters of that State, delight to pay him this tribute. To me, as a North Carolinian, born and bred, it is a source of pride and gratification to participate in these ceremonies. Speaking for those of us who for one reason or another have passed our lives beyond the borders of our native State, I am sure that the memories of our homeland are all the more vivid and our love all the warmer because of that absence. And as the shadows lengthen and our faces turn toward the West these feelings grow still stronger and more poignant. . . . .

From the earliest days of North Carolina his family had been prominent and distinguished. John Baptista Ashe was Speaker of the Assembly before the Revolution. He took up arms at the beginning of that war, became a major general and died in 1781, as a result of wounds received and illness contracted in the service. Another ancestor, Samuel Ashe, was probably the last survivor of the North Carolina Continentals. There were governors and judges, there were legislators, both Federal and State, and always in time of war there were in North Carolina soldiers of the race and name of Ashe. (And now ave) Captain Samuel A'Court Ashe was the last surviving commissioned officer of the Confederate forces. And so, sprung from such North Carolina stock, he played well his part in every phase of the history of his State. He was active in many and varied fields of effort; and he touched nothing which he did not adorn. He figured in great and notable events; and he was always equal to the occasion. "He nothing common did, or mean, upon that memorable scene. . . .

And in addition to my sentiment as a North Carolinian, I had the strongest personal admiration, respect and affection for Captain Ashe. He was an old and valued friend both of my father and of my mother. More than once, in his travels through the State he spent the night at our home of Cool Spring down on the Tar River in Edgecombe. And indeed, I detect in all the words that have been spoken here and in the atmosphere of this occasion a sense of deep personal affection and bereavement. We all feel that we have lost a friend whose memory we can never forget. This is not always the case on occasions such as these. There are many good men and women whose virtues we recognize and whose loss we regret, but without this keen emotion. I think that the source of this sentiment which we all share this afternoon is our realization that we are mourning not only one who truly loved his friends, but one who had a deep sympathy with all humanity, who was anxious to help everyone whom he met in his journey through life. Captain Ashe followed consistently the admonition of the old Quaker who said in noble and memorable words:

"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

State Capitol at Night, Lighted by Floodlights

Captain Ashe never deferred nor neglected to do any good or to show any kindness in his power to any fellow creature and so the memory of his path through life is fragrant with good thoughts and good deeds."

He served with notable distinction throughout this four years of war, showing the same gallantry, the same resourcefulness, and the same humanity that marked his entire career. The story of his military experience is a part of the war history of his State.

The next years of his life cover what has well been called the tragic era of our country. Captain Ashe was twenty-five years of age at the time of the surrender at Appomattox in 1865. For the next eleven years—until 1876—our State was plunged in the horrors of Reconstruction—far more disastrous and hurtful than those of the war itself. There was, I believe, no Southern State that suffered so much from the crimes and evils of Reconstruction as did North Carolina. . . .

Crime and vice were rampant; the State government was permeated by shocking corruption, State bonds to the amount of millions of dollars, admittedly illegal and fraudulent, were issued. The University was closed. . . .

The forces of order gradually resumed control. Finally, in 1876, when those two great North Carolinians, Zebulon Baird Vance and Thomas Jordan Jarvis were elected Governor and Lieutenant-Governor respectively, the State was redeemed and the monstrous regime of Reconstruction came to an end.

During this period Captain Ashe was splendidly and most efficiently active in his efforts to curb the malign forces of oppression and tyranny and to help his State and its people. After the War, he found himself ruined and destitute as was the case with most Southern men at that time. . . .

In the final campaign of 1876, he was most active together with General William R. Cox, who was Chairman of the Campaign Committee; and the success of the forces of decency and honesty in 1876 were largely due to his efforts. As a citizen, as a legislator, as an editor, he strove constantly, and inces-

saintly, and most efficiently during these terrible years to help and redeem his people. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of his services to his State during this time. And the story of his actions in these years reflects the history of the State.

After that eventful year of 1876, when the disorders of the war and those of Reconstruction, which were far worse, had been concluded, the State of North Carolina followed its normal course. Gradually the injuries and wounds which were the result of those evil days were treated and healed. The University was reopened and entered upon its great career of success and usefulness to the State. The public school system was reconstructed and placed on a high plane under the leadership of Governor Aycock and his associates. The State debt was finally and properly settled. Then there came the vast industrial revolution throughout the State. . . .

He edited the eight-volume biographical history of the State, which is an invaluable source of material for the future. He has written in two volumes a most interesting and definitive history of the State, from the days of the Lost Colony down through the year 1925. This work is in every public library and is most highly esteemed. It is a masterpiece of historical erudition and accuracy. And during these years Captain Ashe was abreast of all the good work of every kind in the State. He was active in its charitable and philanthropic enterprises. He was one of the prominent and distinguished members of the Protestant Episcopal Church. His life has been a shining example to all the young men and women of the State. Throughout all his years, from his childhood to his last days, he served his State well and nobly. He consistently represented her best interest and her highest standard. It may truly be said of him that he rendered inestimable service to his native State, both in war and peace, and that he holds a high place in the hearts of his people.

No one could better deserve the great honor which his been paid him by the Legislature of North Carolina in authorizing this memorial tablet here in the Capitol Square of our State. It is most artistic and beautiful in its conception and execution. When we look upon his high and noble face, with its ineffable expression of humanity and kindness, as well as of intelligence and courage, it recalls to us our friend who has gone. It is a common belief that when the human traveler is passing from one stage of life to the next, when he stands on the verge of that mystery which we call Death, the events of his past come up like a great panorama before his dying vision, so that he may see the course of his life from beginning to end. Assuredly, if Samuel A'Court Ashe had such an outlook upon his century of life, he would have seen a constant record of high and noble achievement and of unswerving devotion to the interests of the State of North Carolina, which he held so near his heart. Doubtless at that supreme moment his thoughts went back to his early days along the Cape Fear, when he could hear the call of the killdees along the river bottoms, and the swift rush of the quail in the uplands, when he could see the wild geese, and the wild ducks following each other in single file from one end of the horizon to the other, and when he could observe the graceful and the majestic course of the hawks swooping down and wheeling their way through the southern sky. Doubtless, he could remember those plains of the Tidewater, the hills of the Piedmont, and the lofty mountains of the West, that all go to make up his native State. He could recall the people of that State whom he held and by whom he was held so dear. He could recall his long and noble service to that State and to his people, and as his eyes closed for his last sleep, he might well realize that no one ever better deserved that familiar but noblest of all accolades, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" No one better deserved that sleep which God giveth to his beloved. And now his life is ended. In the fullness of years and of achievement and of honor, he has passed from us and has gone to his long reward. We are here to do him well-deserved honor. May he rest in peace!

"Life's race well run,
Life's work well done,
Life's victory won,
Now cometh rest."

These tributes were paid to a member of our Society of the Cincinnati. We are proud of his comradeship and life.